

Nathaniel Dyer House
North Pamet Road
Truro
Barnstable County
Massachusetts

HABS No. MA-713

HABS
MASS,
I-TRU,
13-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

REDUCED COPIES OF MEASURED DRAWINGS

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D. C. 20240

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

THE NATHANIEL DYER HOUSE

HABS No. MA-713

Location: North Pamet Road.
Truro, Barnstable County, Massachusetts.

Present Owner: Nathaniel B. Dyer.
Oakland Avenue, Hanover, Massachusetts.

Present Occupant: Nathaniel B. Dyer and family.

Present Use: Summer residence.

Significance: This is an early Cape Cod "double house" of approximately the 1830s. The early character of the house is still present, on the interior as well as the exterior. Like most houses in this area, however, some changes have been made. It is located within the proposed National Seashore area on Cape Cod.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

Original and subsequent owners The present owner said that the house has always been in the Dyer family, having been built for his great grandfather, Nathaniel Dyer, who willed it to his son and daughter, Nathaniel A. Dyer and Huldah Dyer. The next owners were Joseph and John K. Dyer. Joseph bought John's interest in about 1915. He willed the property to his widow and son, the present owner, who, in 1936, purchased his mother's share.

Date of erection 1830's

Architect Unknown.

Builder Unknown.

Original plans None known to exist.

Alterations and additions 1929, Hodgson prefab room added to north of house, east side. Bath room added to summer kitchen. 1952- Hodgson room replaced by new construction for modern kitchen.

Historical events connected with structure None of importance have been uncovered except that the Dyer family was one of the influential families in the early days of this part of Cape Cod.

Important old views Mrs. Ruth Dyer, Truro Librarian, who lives across the road from this place, has some old photos of this area showing this house, taken about 1890, showing over all views.

Sources of information Mrs. Ruth Dyer, Truro; present owner.

Likely sources not yet investigated A search could be made of the old Town Records of The Town of Truro which are located within the Town Hall in Truro. The records go back to the start of the Town. Also, the Barnstable County records in the Court House at Barnstable are available. The records are scarce however, before 1827 due to a fire there which destroyed many of the old records.

Prepared by Charles S. Dotts
Charles S. Dotts, Architect
HABS Cape Cod Survey I
Summer 1960, July 18.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

GENERAL STATEMENT

Architectural interest and merit This is a story and a half early 19th century Cape Cod "double house". Like most of similar houses in the general area, changes have been made, but for the most part, the early character of the house has been retained. This is located within the area of the proposed Cape Cod National Seashore.

Condition of fabric This structure has been well taken care of, and is in good condition.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE EXTERIOR

Overall dimensions 23'-9" x 30'-6" (original house).

Foundations Wood sill on brick foundations.

Wall construction Post and beam frame construction. Corner posts are exposed on the interior, and these are 8 x 8, as seen in the garret. Similar posts are located 12 feet from the east wall on the north and south sides of the house. Visible also from the garret are the horizontal sheathing boards. These are covered on the exterior with shingles, painted white. The roof is supported by 3 1/2 x 7 wood trusses, located 4'-0" on center. Their lower ends were notched onto a horizontal girt or top plate of the same size. At the ridge, the trusses are fastened together with a wood-pegged saddle joint. There is no ridge beam. The exterior shingles are exposed 5" to 5 1/2"

Porches, stoops There is a brick stoop at the front entrance.

Chimneys Two - one, of brick over the center of the original house;
new brick chimney over the modern kitchen, rear of the house.

Openings - doorways and doors Main entrance has a 4 panel wood door with
4 light transom.

windows and shutters 9/6 lights in double hung sash on first floor,
6/6 windows, second floor. These appear to have the original
trim and sash. Louvered shutters are old.

Roof - shape, covering Gabled, pitched, wood shingled.

cornice, eaves wood box cornice, narrow eaves.

dormers none.

INTERIOR

Floor plans This is a Cape Cod "double house" which faces south in
the typical Cape Cod manner. The main entrance on the south is
flanked by a two window east room and a two window west room.
The front door leads into an entry which has doors leading to the
east and west rooms. A closet is located at the rear of the entry.

In back of these rooms and entry was apparently the original
kitchen, centrally located and which is now used as a living room.
At the east end of this kitchen are two rooms, the buttery and small
bed room, known as the "boring room". Entrance to this room is
by doorway from the east front room and from the kitchen. The but-
tery is entered from the kitchen.

On the west end of the kitchen is a small bed room, with the
stairs to the second floor located between these two rooms. In
back of the east half of the kitchen and buttery was originally
located a one room addition 13'-0" east and west, and 9'-6"
north and south. This could have been built at the time of the
original house, although this is not known. The present owner
said he remembered the room as a summer kitchen, and in 1929 it
was converted into a bath on the east and a hall on the west
which leads to a modern kitchen of new construction, 1952. This
room replaced a former Hodgson prefabricated room of 1929.

The second floor has two bedrooms on the east and one on the west
with garret storage located along the north and south exterior
walls. The partitions in these rooms appear to be of early con-
struction.

A round brick cellar, 12'-9" in diameter is located under the
buttery and small bed room on the east side of the house, and
entrance is by exterior steps of wood and brick construction.

Stairways One, wood, steep run, leading from first to second floor between original kitchen and west bed room.

Flooring Random width (6" to 20") pine flooring, probably original.

Wall and ceiling finish For the most part, the walls and ceilings are plastered, with wood wainscoting and chair rail at the window stool height. East front room, first floor has fireplace wall wood paneling on the west wall. This is in good condition. On this wall is located, to the south of the fireplace, a 12 light china cupboard with storage below.

Doors 6 panel wood doors, 3/4" thick.

Trim Apparently original trim on first floor with mitered window and door decorative molded trim.

Hardware There is an old lift latch at the front door; some old butt hinges are noted in the house; modern hardware is also seen in parts of the house.

Lighting Electric.

Heating No central heat. The three original fireplaces in the east room, west room, and original kitchen have been blocked up and are not in use.

SITE

Orientation The house faces south in lee of hill, in typical Cape Cod manner; terraced lawn, close to the road. The property is on a tract of 28 acres. There were about 2 acres in the original tract, according to the present owner.


Enclosures No fences, but house is surrounded with shrubbery.

Outbuildings None.

Walks, driveways, Gravel drive and small parking space next to the road on the east side of the house.

Landscaping Pleasant setting among shrubbery and trees, well trimmed lawn and shrubbery, informal planting.

Prepared by


Charles S. Dotts, Architect
HABS Cape Cod Survey I
Summer 1960, July 13.

References:

HABS Measured Drawings, Cape Cod Survey I, Eastham Field Office, Summer 1960.